

behind the scenes that the late Emperor Frederick contemplated this restitution, and that the present chivalrous young Emperor has only waited until he felt himself sufficiently strong to move in the matter. This he will shortly do with the full approval of the larger German states—of Bavaria and Saxony—and all sensible men in the German Empire. The new year may therefore bring the most solid possible guarantee of European peace.—*E.v.*

Sir Frederick Roberts, Bart., C.C.B., G.C.I.E., V.C., is retiring from the Command-in-Chief of our Army in India. He is without doubt the most able and distinguished general in the service. The question in military circles is—who will succeed him? The appointment is a good one—worth some £8,000 a year—so innumerable “political” and “carpet” soldiers are fishing for it. There is quite a buzz at the Horse Guards. The position Sir Frederick vacates especially requires a wise and experienced soldier—the issue attaching to it is immense—the safety of our Indian Empire! Whom have we capable to succeed the brave and modest hero of Lucknow, and of Candahar? Lord Wolseley! Save the mark! That would indeed be setting “impudence” in the chair of “dignity.” The Viceroy and Sir Frederick recommend Major-General White. They know who is fit. It is too much to hope, however, that the “backstair” influence at home will permit the selection.—*E.v.*

The new ballooning plant for the use of the French army arrived recently at Arras from the works of Chalais-Meudon and differs principally from the old apparatus by the exclusive employment of hydrogen gas, compressed to 200 atmospheres in steel cylinders, for inflating the balloon. As such cylinders only weigh six kilos to earth cubic metre of gas the aerostatic plant is considerably lightened, since the preparation of the gas on the spot would have necessitated the transport of nine kilos of chemical materials for each cubic metre of gas produced, without taking carriages and receivers into consideration. Another advantage which the new system possesses consists in the extraordinary short time—fifteen minutes—required for inflating the balloon. Moreover, water can in this case be dispensed with, while with the old system it was necessary to have a supply continually on the spot. The whole operation of inflating the balloon is rendered extremely simple, and no preliminary operations are required. The balloon can therefore be, so to say, most rapidly mobilised, and thus tactical opportunity can be utilised, since the balloon can be got ready at any moment and in any place. Eight carriages have been constructed at Chalais-Meudon, each of which is capable of conveying eight cylinders which are provided with a brass closing valve, constructed by Major Renard. Two carriages fully laden with cylinders are required for the inflation of the balloon. To compress the gas a pump is employed, which can compress 150 cubic metres of hydrogen under a pressure of 200 atmospheres in one hour. It has been stated that the gas used for inflating the balloon can be recovered and again compressed in the cylinders, but this is incorrect, for the compression of the gas requires considerable time, as well as very powerful and ponderous stationary machinery, which could not accompany the army during a campaign. An aerostatic park is to be attached to each army corps and placed under the direct authority of the head of the general staff, and one to each fortified place designated by the Minister of War. The ascents hitherto made have sufficiently proved the excellent material and construction of the balloons, which may perhaps be destined to neutralise to some extent the advantages claimed for smokeless powder, since they can be so rapidly utilised and enable the occupants of the car to discover the position of the enemy at a great distance.

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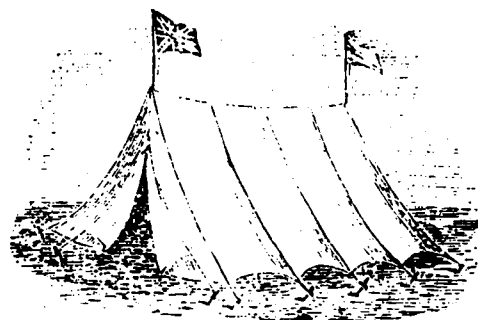
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